

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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4-9-07

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instruction. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Harriet F. Rees House

other names/site number:

2. Location

street and number: 2110 South Prairie Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town: Chicago

N/A vicinity

state: Illinois

county: Cook County

zip code 60616-1323

3. State/Federal/Tribal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other. (explain: _____)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Historic Subfunctions

(Enter subcategories from instructions)

Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Current Subfunctions

(Enter subcategories from instructions)

Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

Romanesque

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Limestone
Walls Limestone

Brick

Roof Slate

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is

- A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1888-1956

Significant Dates

1888

Significant Person

(Complete if criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Cobb & Frost

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS:)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
- See continuation sheet for additional HABS/HAER documentation.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government (Repository Name: City of Chicago - Department of Planning and Development, Landmarks Division)
- University
- Other

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 0.10

UTM References 16 448475 E 4633522 N

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Harriet F. Rees House
Name of Property

Cook County Illinois
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jennifer R. Kenny, Preservation Specialist

organization: Granacki Historic Consultants

date: 12/15/2006

street & number: 1105 W. Chicago Avenue, Suite 201

telephone: (312) 421-1131

city or town: Chicago

state: Illinois

zip code: 60622-5701

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Nick Martorina

street & number: 2621 W. Grand Avenue

telephone: (773) 342-2255

city or town: Chicago

state: Illinois

zip code: 60612-1116

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Program Center, National Park Service, 1849 C Street NW, Washington DC 20240; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

The Harriet F. Rees House at 2110 South Prairie Avenue is one of the last few residences remaining on Prairie Avenue, Chicago's most fashionable late nineteenth-century residential enclave. The masonry home, located in Chicago's Near South Side community area, was designed by Cobb and Frost and built in 1888. Standing three and a half stories with an ashlar limestone front façade and common brick secondary facades, the house features a dominant two-story bowed bay, a Romanesque-arched window colonnade, and a steep gable peak with stone finial. The Rees House is remarkably intact inside and out, retaining its historic room configurations, decorative woodwork in a rich variety of woods, numerous fireplaces and surrounds, and even an early elevator.

CONTEXT AND SETTING

The Rees House is located in the Near South Side community area of Chicago, approximately two miles south of the Loop. The Near South Side is bounded by Roosevelt Road on the north, 26th Street on the south, Lake Michigan on the east, the South Branch of the Chicago River and Clark Street on the west.

Land uses in the Near South Side are mixed. Predominantly industrial throughout the twentieth-century, in recent years a boom in condominium and townhouse development has added numerous residential units and population to the community. In prior years, population in the community area was one of the lowest in the City of Chicago, with only 6,828 people in 1990, growing to 9,509 in the 2000 census, and increasing through the current decade. Some of the condominiums are located in former industrial loft buildings built near the community's transportation routes, while other dwelling units are in buildings constructed in the last two decades. Transportation routes dominate the Near South Side since railroad lines pass through the neighborhood to enter the Loop from the south. Lake Shore Drive, as a major north-south highway along the lakefront, forms a wide cut along the eastern edge. Historically, commercial uses in the area were limited to Michigan Avenue and State Street, particularly near elevated railroad station stops.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

"Automobile Row," historically located along Michigan Avenue between 14th Street and 26th Street, features elaborately appointed showroom buildings from the early twentieth-century. This historic district has been designated a landmark by the City of Chicago.

Along the lakefront are some of the city's major cultural and high-profile institutions. McCormick Place, the city's convention center, first constructed at 23rd Street and Lake Michigan in 1960, was rebuilt after a fire in 1967. Recent additions have expanded the complex, which was added onto in the 1990s and early 2000s. The Rees House is just to the north of Cermak Road and now in the shadows of the McCormick Place complex. Other institutions include Soldier Field, a Chicago Park District facility first built in 1926 and invaded by a remodeling in 2002-03 in cooperation with the National Football League's Chicago Bears franchise, and the museum campus along Lake Michigan, including cultural institutions such as the Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, and Adler Planetarium.

The Near South Side also contains Prairie Avenue, considered Chicago's most fashionable residential street from the post-Civil War era through the turn of the nineteenth-century. It is here that the Harriet Rees House is located, on a street once lined with substantial two- and three-story masonry single-family residences. As the lone house on the west side of Prairie Avenue on the 2100 block, it now is surrounded by light industrial buildings and parking lots. The vacant lot to the north of the Rees House is scheduled to be the home of a new nine-story residential development.

The Rees house takes up most of its 24.08 x 178.5 foot lot, and once shared a party wall with a now demolished nineteenth-century building at 2108 South Prairie Avenue. When Harriet Rees purchased the property in 1888, it also shared a two-story common brick coach house with its neighbor to the north.¹ An agreement was made to construct an east/west partition wall through the middle of the structure, which sat at the rear of the lot. Today, only one part of the coach house, which pre-dates the Rees House, remains. The other part was likely demolished when the house to the north was removed. Historic features are still present on the coach house including a brick cornice with alternating

¹ According to document 941628, found in the property records at the Cook County Recorder of Deeds, a partition wall was created that ran east to west through the barn. At the time the property at 2110 S. Prairie was purchased, the barn was owned by Mark Kimball who lived next door to the north. Only a portion of the barn still stands.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

projecting brick headers, and brick lintels with keystones. Alterations include the insertion of an overhead garage door at the alley and replacement entry doors and windows.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSE

EXTERIOR

The Harriet F. Rees House is a three-story limestone and brick single-family residence designed by the architectural firm of Cobb and Frost in 1888. It features a steeply pitched cross gable roof of slate at the front part of the house, while the rear is flat-roofed. All windows are original wood, one over one, double-hung sash that were recently restored with double insulated glazing added. Transoms are found only above the first floor windows on the front (east) façade. Of note are the five arched wood windows at the third floor of the front façade.

When 2110 South Prairie Avenue was constructed, the home was built to the property lines between buildings that then existed to the north and south. For this reason, all architectural detailing is confined to the front (east) elevation while the sides are unadorned. Smooth ashlar limestone clads the principal façade, which has a rusticated stone base. This façade is dominated by an elegant two-story, bowed front bay topped with a shallow conical copper roof accented with roofline copper trim with ornamental scrollwork. Dividing the first and second floors of the bay is a horizontal rinceau frieze.

Third floor windows on the front façade are highly decorative, with a ribbon of five windows recessed behind a colonnade. Here, stone arches spring from columns topped with foliated capitals. Stone spandrels have both foliated and circular designs that delicately frame the tops of the stone arches. The third floor stone sill, where the columns rest, is accented at its ends with square stone panels inset with similar flowing foliated and circular designs.

Reaching upward is the steeply pitched limestone parapeted front gable topped with a stone finial. Inset in the gable peak is a triangular panel with graceful foliated motifs and an acanthus leaf at center. Below that is a diminutive attic window opening with ogee arch stone trim accented with leaf motifs.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

All decorative stonework on this façade is refined, from the highly emblematic *fleur de lis* keystones above second floor windows to the foliated corner panels that accent the gabled parapet. The front stairs are also stone, leading up to a round-arched entry with transom (currently boarded in for security) with ornamental stone surround with leaf and grape motif. The wood front door exhibits a single pane of glass above and an elaborately decorated rectangular panel below inset with an oval surrounded by foliated motifs.

The Rees House was one of the last single-family homes constructed on the block. Wedged into a lot with an almost 25-foot frontage, the building's side elevations were not architecturally treated. The walls are common brick, unbroken in appearance from the basement level to the roofline, with the exception of the chimney that is on the south facade. The north sidewall is formerly the party wall that was shared with the now demolished building at 2108. The south sidewall is setback from about mid-way to the rear of the house.

The rear elevation is also common brick. A full height bay is found at the corner with brickwork at its corners. Windows have simple brick lintels with two header courses and stone sills. A rear one story entry porch with a slate roof, likely original, has a temporary door and stairs to the back yard.

INTERIOR

The interior of the home is remarkably intact in plan and pristine in architectural features, genuinely reflecting its 1888 construction. Historic room configurations are in place, including original plaster walls that have been recently restored. Numerous character defining architectural features include: wood paneled doors and pocket doors in a wide variety of wood species, wood door and window trim, tall baseboards, paneled wainscoting, nine distinctive fireplaces with original ornate mantels, ceramic tile surrounds and hearth, staircase with unique newels, handrails and spindles, elaborate door and window hardware, operable skylight, and an elevator cab. Highly crafted ornament, with intricate geometric and foliated motifs, is expressed in architectural elements throughout the home. One regular geometric circle pattern uses a repeating series of circles with intersecting orthogonal and diagonal lines. Despite the simplicity of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

the basic geometric shapes used, the overall pattern is visually engaging. Foliated designs are also complex, but sinuous, incorporating vines, acanthus leaves and grapes. All of these signature elements capture the essence of Cobb and Frost's architectural design for Harriet F. Rees in the late nineteenth-century.

Just inside the arched exterior front door is a rectangular vestibule. Walls in this space feature oak paneled wainscoting with an ornamental band with the geometric circle motif above. Flooring appears to be encaustic tile with floral and geometric motifs. The vestibule leads to an interior oak door with sidelights and transom above. Again, geometrically carved bands are found, this time in the door surround that also has dentil trim.

The vestibule leads to a foyer and stair hall, separated by a wing wall. All flooring in these spaces is oak strip, and walls have oak, paneled wainscoting with the same circle motif band. A grand open staircase, also of oak, leads up to the second floor along the north wall of the wainscoted stair hall. Newels on each floor are topped with a belcast newel cap and a band below with the signature geometric circle motif. There are four turned balusters resting on each tread, with carriage panels accented by the geometric circle motif. Along the south wall of the foyer and stair hall are pocket doors that lead to two back to back parlors.

The front parlor is graced with a circular front bay with recessed windows that allow for bench seating. Built into the windows are wood louvered shutters with shutter pockets. The circular bay allows the room to break from its rectangular shape, as accented by curving decorative moldings on the plaster walls and ceilings. The front parlor is focused on a broad fireplace, with original mirror above the mantel. The mirror has carved foliated designs at its corners, while the wood mantel has dentil trim and a rinceau band. A ceramic tile surround and hearth has a high gloss finish with a simple flower design on each square tile. Built-in wood bookcases line a portion of both the south and north walls. Ceilings are coved. Through a set of paneled pocket doors on the west wall is the second parlor. Again, a sizable fireplace is the focal point of the room, with a mirror above the mantel. The mantel has dentil trim, acanthus leaf motifs, rectangular panels, and a glossy ceramic tile surround.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 6

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

Moving to the west (rear) is the powder room, service hall with staircase and original elevator on the south, and a drawing room to the north leading into the main dining room. From the dining room a small room leads out to the rear exit. Simple beadboard wainscoting of oak accents the walls. Floors are wood strip. Of note is the elevator shaft and original wood cab with screened walls. The dining room is irregularly shaped due to the bay window found at the southwest corner of the room. Windows are recessed with bench seating and paneling in the coves above. The entire north wall of the dining room is built in with a large fireplace and cabinets. An elaborate wood mantel with ceramic tile surround and hearth is at center, with breakfronts displaying shelves that rest on carved supports, mirrors behind, sconces, and rinceau panels.

The second floor features a spacious hall running the length of the house, staircase along the north wall, three bedrooms, a service hall with elevator and stair, and bath. All doors on this floor are five-paneled wood doors, each with an operable transom above, and decorative classical casings and corner blocks inset with the home's signature geometric circle pattern. The east bedroom runs across the entire front of the home. The rounded bay adds interest to the room, with similar treatments at its windows. The home's fourth fireplace is a focal point on the south wall of the bedroom, with glistening ceramic tile with four inset decorative tiles featuring four different cherub designs. There is a niche on the west wall with built in-sink. A closet at the bedroom's southwest corner leads to a second (south) bedroom on this floor. Finishes are similar, except for the fireplace on the south wall. This fireplace with wood mantel exhibits a blue ceramic tile surround with narrow rectangular tiles. A row of seven ceramic tiles is placed together above the firebox with a continuous decorative design of lovebirds and leaves. Down the hall and to the west of the south bedroom is a bath, followed by the service stair and elevator. Finishes in the service hall are the same as the first floor. At the rear of the second floor is a third bedroom with an irregular plan due to the octagonal shape of the rear bay. The room was converted into a kitchen at one time, with plumbing for a sink and appliance on its east wall. The fireplace on the north wall has a one-piece mantel, with simple mantel shelf with scroll brackets. The ceramic tile surround is glossy with square tiles decorated with a rinceau motif. All flooring is oak strip with similar one-foot tall baseboards around the room.

The third floor contains the remainder of the home's bedrooms, particularly the servant's quarters at the rear (west). At the top of the stairs is a decorative skylight with colored

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 7

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

glass, which is operable. The floor plan is similar to the second floor, with a central hall with doors leading to all of the rooms and closets. Doors are wood and five-paneled as found on the second floor, but are accented with different trim and corner bulls-eye blocks. The baseboard is also scaled down. The front (east) bedroom, bedroom number four, has a coved ceiling and a dramatic ribbon of five arched windows adding light to the space. Again, a fireplace is the heart of the room, this time with a simpler wood mantel, mantel shelf supported by fluted round columns and ceramic tile surround with small rectangular tiles. Bedroom number five, (south bedroom) also has coved ceilings. The fireplace mantel on the south wall is Eastlake in style with a simple surround of square tiles. Other tiles feature curvilinear leaf designs and sunflowers. Another bath is at the center of the third floor, followed by the servants' wing beyond a door off of the stair. The wing features the servants' stair and elevator, with similar treatments as found below, and two small bedrooms: one on the south wall, and one at the rear. Baseboards are very simple with no decorative moldings on its plaster walls.

A steep set of stairs leads up to an unfinished attic which is one unfinished room with soaring ceilings following the steeply pitched lines of the cross gable roof that has a dormer window on the west wall. The basement is an unfinished space, with brick walls and visible rusticated stone foundation. Room configurations are present, but no finishes remain where the kitchen of the house formerly was located.

OVERALL INTEGRITY

The Rees House is remarkably intact, retaining much of its historic 1888 design, and effectively conveys the work of Cobb and Frost. Although there were some interior changes that enclosed the open staircase when converted to a restaurant by 1970, these changes have been recently reversed by the present owners. The interior retains its 1888 plan in its principal spaces on each floor, its ornament and its architectural detailing.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

The Harriet F. Rees House at 2110 South Prairie Avenue is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for local significance as a finely-crafted urban residential example of late nineteenth-century Romanesque Revival-Style architecture and designed by the noted Chicago architectural firm of Cobb & Frost. Recognized in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey as an orange-rated or locally significant building, the Rees House is also a rare, outstanding single family residence remaining at the south end of Upper Prairie Avenue, Chicago's most fashionable late nineteenth-century residential enclave. Exceptional architectural integrity remains in this substantial house built in 1888 by the widow of James H. Rees, a prominent nineteenth-century Chicagoan, who was significant in the real estate community as an early and influential property title abstractor and mapmaker.

HISTORY OF THE NEAR SOUTH SIDE AND CHICAGO'S UPPER PRAIRIE AVENUE"

The Near South Side community, where the Rees House is located, has origins in the early nineteenth-century. Many years before Chicago's historic Prairie Avenue was developed, it was the site of the Fort Dearborn Massacre of 1812, which occurred shortly after the evacuation of the fort located on the south bank of the Chicago River. Following the departure of Native Americans, over two decades would pass before permanent settlement occurred in the area. In 1834, Elijah D. Harmon first purchased a 138-acre tract bounded by 16th Street on the north, 22nd Street (Cermak Road) on the south, State Street on the west, and Lake Michigan on the east. One of the community's first European settlers, Henry B. Clarke, completed his Greek Revival-style home in the area in 1836 on a twenty-acre parcel purchased from Harmon. Later settlers in the community were of German, Irish, and Scandinavian descent and had worked on the Illinois and Michigan Canal begun in 1836 and completed by 1848. Once the canal was finished, residents found work in the community's lumber district that emerged along the south branch of the Chicago River. As water transportation was supplanted by the railroads by the late 1850s, industries began to locate along the rail lines that pushed

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8

Page 9

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

through the Near South Side. Development, which was very limited prior to the railroads, began as workers in these industries built homes. By 1853, the city limits were expanded southward to 31st Street, and further development was launched with the expansion of street car lines from the central business district into the neighborhood. However, a large portion of the community remained undeveloped until after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

The Harriet Rees House was built at the south end of what is known as "Upper Prairie Avenue," one of Chicago's most prestigious residential streets of the late nineteenth-century. From 16th Street to 22nd Street, the northern section of late nineteenth-century Prairie Avenue boasted uninterrupted blocks of imposing, well-built mansions designed by prominent architects in fashionable styles. Along this linear avenue that runs north to south, Chicago millionaires such as George Pullman, Philip D. Armour, and Marshall Field took residence in the years following the Great Fire of 1871. At that time, Chicago's pioneering families rebuilt their homes away from the increasingly commercial downtown area, and on land untouched by debris from the fire. Residential growth and development was also attracted to Chicago's south side, particularly along Prairie Avenue, because of hindrances caused by the location of the Chicago River and its branches. While residents of the north and west sides had to cross the waterways, enduring congested river and land traffic to and from the Loop, south siders had no such geographic barriers and thus easier and quicker access.

Prairie Avenue and nearby streets were first laid out as the Assessor's Division, a subdivision stretching from 17th Street on the north, 22nd Street to the south, the Illinois Central Railroad tracks to the east, and State Street to the west. This pre-fire land division resulted from speculation of railroad expansion southward from the Loop into then suburban Hyde Park by 1855-56. Sometime before June 1852,² John N. Staples, a brick manufacturer, is believed to have constructed the first house on Prairie Avenue. This two-story Italianate-Style residence was built at 1702 South Prairie Avenue. Development on the Avenue was briefly slowed by the Civil War but accelerated soon after. By 1870, Prairie Avenue received one of the avenue's most expensive homes, costing an exorbitant \$100,000. For Daniel M. Thompson, a grain elevator operator, an

² Molloy, Mary Alice. "Prairie Avenue, Chicago, Illinois" in Jan Cigliano and Sara Landau. *The Grand American Avenue, 1850-1920*. Rohnert Park, CA: Pomegranate Art Books, 1994, p. 133.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

Italianate villa was constructed at the corner of Prairie Avenue and 12th Street³ on a site where lots were 200 feet deep. Soon, numerous families of means began to call Prairie Avenue home, including Chicago's most prominent businessmen and industrialists. Chicago novelist (and Prairie Avenue resident) Arthur Meeker referred to Prairie Avenue as the "sunny street that held the sifted few." The rise of Prairie Avenue continued by 1874 when Chicago trade periodical, *The Land Owner*, labeled Prairie Avenue as "one of the most fashionable and handsomely-built of all of our South-Side thoroughfares." The issue featured engravings of residences built by Chicago's aristocrats and, as a result, further promoted Prairie Avenue as the city's residential showplace of its day. It was also a street of firsts, having the first house in Chicago to be illuminated with electric lights in 1882. According to architectural historian and Prairie Avenue expert Mary Alice Molloy, Prairie Avenue would remain Chicago's "residence street par excellence" for more than three decades in the late nineteenth-century."⁴

By the late 1880s, most lots on Upper Prairie Avenue had been improved with two- to three-story single family detached residences. Many were on standard 25-foot lots with similar setbacks, while others covered two or more lots. Homes on Prairie Avenue were lavishly detailed on their principal façades, or two facades when situated on a corner. Prairie Avenue residents commissioned designs by noted architects of the era, both nationally and locally reputable. The street showcased designs by architect William LeBaron Jenney, who introduced French architecture to Prairie Avenue in his design at 1701 for hardware giant William Gold Hibbard (demolished); architect Richard Morris Hunt, who designed a home for Marshall Field; architect Henry S. Jaffray, a Hunt protégé; who designed the Second Empire style George Pullman House at 1729 and S. S. Beman who designed its numerous additions (demolished); the architectural firm of Burnham and Root who designed the John B. Sherman Residence in the Victorian Gothic Revival style at 2100 (demolished); and the architectural firm of Cobb and Frost who designed a Romanesque Revival-Style brownstone for Miner T. Ames in 1886 at 1811 South Prairie Avenue.

Masonry construction dominated Prairie Avenue, including the widespread use of quarried limestone. The richness of the high-quality stone appealed to the residents of

³ Ibid, p. 130.

⁴ Ibid, p. 131.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 11

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

Prairie Avenue, whose home needed to reflect their affluence. Buff white when freshly quarried, the "marble" was then polished to a smooth finish. Marketed as "Athens Marble" and "Joliet Marble," the stone product from both the Joliet, Illinois and Lemont, Illinois quarries could be cut to specific sizes. Lemont limestone was particularly sought after for dimension stone since it was free from visible fossil bodies, had a fine grain and standard color without streaks, and was found in layers thick enough to be cut into blocks. Limestone was also used in brick residences along Prairie Avenue for decorative accents.

Most Prairie Avenue homes were designed to impress in the picturesque styles of the late nineteenth-century, first in the Second Empire Style, followed by Victorian Gothic Revival Style and the Queen Anne Style. When architect Henry Hobson Richardson designed the masterful John J. Glessner House at 1800 South Prairie Avenue (1886), the Romanesque Revival style (Richardsonian Romanesque) became the choice for residential design for Prairie Avenue's upper crust. By the late 1880s the influence of Richardson's monumental design with rusticated stone and arched openings was greatly felt. One of the last homes built on Prairie Avenue, 2110, is a Romanesque Revival Style design. 2110 South Prairie was built for Harriet F. Rees, the widow of early real estate man James R. Rees, and is the sole survivor on its block from the avenue's heyday.

Prairie Avenue's decline began soon after the World's Columbian Exposition and the Panic of 1893. Challenged by Chicago's other fashionable areas, such as the Gold Coast where prominent Chicagoan and hotelier Potter Palmer built his north side home, construction on Prairie Avenue essentially ceased by 1905. As land prices dropped in the early twentieth-century, Prairie Avenue faced transformation. The once high-end residential community became transient as many of the grand homes were converted into boarding houses. When industries began to insert buildings into the residential streetscape in the first decades of the twentieth-century, Chicago's planners responded. By designating the entire area for commercial purposes in the first zoning ordinance in 1923, the residential district's demise was sealed. Many residences were demolished through the years, including those condemned at mid-century. By 1966, efforts were started to save remaining residences on Prairie Avenue when the Glessner House was rescued from demolition. Today, a locally-designed landmark district protects the late nineteenth-century homes remaining on Prairie Avenue. When the Chicago Historic Resources Survey (CHRS) was conducted in recent years, only a total of nine residential

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

buildings, including the Rees House, remained on upper and lower Prairie Avenues. Of the following nine buildings in the CHRS, the home at 2126 South Prairie Avenue has since been demolished:

		STREET	YEAR	ARCHITECT	BUILDING STYLE	LAND MARK	NR	IL SUR- VEY C	CHRS COLOR CODE	HISTORIC NAME
1800	S	PRAIRIE AV	1886	RICHARD- SON, HENRY HOBSON	ROMAN- ESQUE REVIVAL	Y	N	N	RD	GLESSNER HOUSE
1801	S	PRAIRIE AV	1890	BEMAN, SOLON S.	CHATEAU- ESQUE (RICHARD- SONIAN)	Y	N	N	OR	KIMBALL HOUSE
1811	S	PRAIRIE AV	1885	COBB & FROST	ROMAN- ESQUE REVIVAL	Y	N	N	OR	COLEMAN- AMES HOUSE
1900	S	PRAIRIE AV	1870		ITALIANATE	Y	N	N	OR	KEITH HOUSE
1919	S	PRAIRIE AV	1884	BEMAN, SOLON S.	QUEEN ANNE	Y	N	N	GN	MARSHALL FIELD JR. HOUSE
2013	S	PRAIRIE AV	1894	BEERS, CLAY & DUTTON	CLASSICAL REVIVAL	N	Y	Y	OR	WILLIAM HENRY REID HOUSE
2110	S	PRAIRIE AV	1888	COBB & FROST	ROMANESQU E REVIVAL	N	N	N	OR	REES, HARRIET F. HOUSE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

2126	S	PRAIRIE AV	1900s	CLASSICAL REVIVAL	N	N	Y	OR	PRAIRIE HOUSE
2801	S	PRAIRIE AV	1889	QUEEN ANNE	N	N	Y	OR	

FIRST OWNER HARRIET F. REES AND THE HISTORY OF 2110 SOUTH PRAIRIE AVENUE

The residence at 2110 South Prairie Avenue was constructed in 1888 for Harriet Frances Butler Rees (b. 1817, Connecticut – d. December 10, 1892, Chicago), the widow of real estate pioneer and land surveyor James H. Rees. James H. Rees (b. April 24, 1813, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania – d. September 20, 1880, Chicago)⁵ was an east coast native who moved westward at the age of twenty-one seeking real estate surveying opportunities. Rees relocated to Chicago, a fledgling city, where he became the first City Surveyor in 1836. He furthered a career in real estate when he joined the firm of Mayor William B. Ogden in 1839, serving as draftsman and clerk.⁶ However, it was when Rees opened up his own real estate business in partnership with law clerk Edward R. Rucker in 1847 that he left his mark on real estate history. Rees' and Rucker's monumental achievement was introducing the concept of abstracts of title. In the mid nineteenth-century, Rees' and Rucker's abstracts of title service was revolutionary in a rapidly growing city that needed documentation of every recorded instrument and legal proceeding regarding a particular property in order to transfer title. When Rucker left the business in 1850, Rees continued the abstract firm while also leaving his mark further by creating a series of maps that recorded the Chicago area in 1851. The following year, Rees formed a new partnership with Samuel B. Chase, an abstract of title firm known as Rees and Chase. Aside from their abstract service, the two began investing in real estate in Lake View Township, at the time just north of the city limits. Land holding and development greatly contributed to Rees' fortune. When

⁵ Obituary. James H. Rees. *Chicago Daily Tribune*. September 21, 1880, p. 8. Accessed through the Proquest Chicago Tribune Historical Archive.

⁶ Dankers, Ulrich and Jane Meredith. *Early Chicago: A Compendium of the Early History of Chicago to the Year 1835 when the Indians Left*. River Forest, IL: Early Chicago, Inc: 2000, p. 299.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

associate Elisha E. Hundley and he began subdividing 225 acres in Lake View Township in 1852-53, suburban development had begun in an ideal area for residences along the Lake Michigan shoreline. To encourage development, Hundley and Rees founded the Lake View House, a summer resort hotel, on July 4, 1854. Rees' real estate firm partner, Samuel B. Chase, also saw potential in Lake View and purchased a ten-acre tract where he constructed an \$18,000 suburban villa.⁷ Chase later purchased James Rees' share of the abstract business in 1852. Rees, who was then living in Lakeview, continued his career in real estate, for a short time with partner S. H. Kerfoot from 1852-1856, followed by D. P. Slocum, and then son-in-law L. H. Pierce. Rees also was called to serve in government as alderman, assessor, and also as collector for South Chicago.

James Rees' real estate holdings yielded a tremendous fortune. He married Harriet Frances Butler on June 4, 1844, and lived a very comfortable life. They were charitable, including supporting the Woman's Hospital of the State of Illinois and its building fund. The couple had one daughter, Mrs. Carrie (L.H.) Pierce. On September 20, 1880, James Rees passed away in their home on Wabash Avenue after battling diabetes for many years.

Widow Harriet Rees resided in Chicago for the remainder of her life. In 1888, at the mature age of 71, Harriet decided to build a home for herself on one of the last remaining parcels on Prairie Avenue, then Chicago's most fashionable street. After spending \$15,000⁸ to purchase the south 24.08 feet of Lot 3 in Gurley's Subdivision on April 9, 1888, from Mark and Elizabeth J. Kimball, Mrs. Rees commissioned the highly-regarded architectural firm of Cobb and Frost to design her new Romanesque Revival Style home.⁹ On a vacant lot with only a 25-foot wide frontage on Prairie Avenue, Cobb & Frost designed the home for Harriet Rees with a "marble front" that is elegantly detailed. A building permit was issued on June 18, 1888 for a three-story dwelling, 20x80x44 at a cost of \$20,000.¹⁰

⁷ Clark, Stephen Bedell and Philip L. Schutt. *The Lake View Saga, 1837-1985*. Chicago: Self published, 1985, p. 11.

⁸ Document no. 941627, Book 2347, p. 67. Property records (microfiche), Cook County Recorder of Deeds Office, Chicago, IL.

⁹ From the "Building Intelligence" column, *The American Architect and Building News*. July 7, 1888, p. XVIII. Column reads: "H. F. Rees, three-st'y dwell., Prairie Ave.; cost, \$20,000; architects, Cobb & Frost."

¹⁰ City of Chicago Building Permit number 1988, Ledger Book E, p. 257.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

On the 2100 block of Prairie Avenue, Harriet joined prominent neighbors John B. Sherman, the head of the Union Stockyards Company who lived at 2100 (demolished 1926), the M. M. Rothschilds who lived at 2112; meat packer Philip D. Armour who purchased lumberman David Kelley's Second Empire-style residence at 2115 and lived there almost 50 years (razed 1937); and Byron L. Smith, founder and first president of the Northern Trust Company who purchased the 1876 home designed by John Van Osdel at 2140 Prairie (demolished 1926).¹¹ After only a short time in the home, Harriet Frances Rees died at her residence at 2110 Prairie Avenue on December 10, 1892 at the age of 75.¹²

SUBSEQUENT OWNERS OF 2110 SOUTH PRAIRIE AVENUE¹³

Following the death of first owner Harriet Rees, the home was sold for \$42,500¹⁴ to newlyweds Edson Keith, Jr. and his wife Nettie Keener Keith who married in Denver, Colorado on April 15, 1891. Native Chicagoan Edson Keith, Jr. (b. June 27, 1862, Chicago, – d. 1939), was the son of Edson and Susan Woodruff Keith, Sr., whose family home was down the street at 1906 Prairie Avenue. An 1884 graduate of Yale University with a Ph.B. in dynamic engineering and an 1889 graduate of Columbia University Law School, Keith, Jr. was an engineer, attorney and composer. He became vice-president of his family's company, Keith Brothers & Company, a wholesale millinery firm in 1897. He assumed the presidency of his own company (Edson Keith and Co.) until his interests in the business were sold in 1901. Edson Keith, Jr. was also accomplished as a composer, with musical compositions published by Schirmer & Company and Lyon & Healy.¹⁵ The Keith, Jr.'s had three children, Katherine (Mrs. David Adler, Jr.), an author of two books, the semi-autobiographical *The Girl* (1917) and *The Crystal Icicle* (1930),¹⁶ Edson Keener Keith (d. June 10, 1892) and Frederick Walter Keith, who continued in the family business. Aside from the home on Prairie Avenue, the Keith family maintained a

¹¹ *Prairie Avenue: Chicago's First Gold Coast*. Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks. Chicago: City of Chicago, March 1973, p. 24.

¹² Death notice. Rees. *Chicago Daily Tribune*. December 11, 1892, p. 6.

¹³ Ownership history was traced through property records in Tract Book 502A, p. 219.

¹⁴ Document no. 1868936, Book 4324, p. 94. Cook County Recorder of Deeds Office, Chicago, IL.

¹⁵ Leonard, John W., editor. *The Book of Chicagoans, 1905*. Chicago: A. N. Marquis & Company, 1905, p. 326 and *The Book of Chicagoans, 1911*. Chicago: A. N. Marquis & Company, 1911, p. 380.

¹⁶ *Book Review Digest*. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1917, p. 304 and *Book Review Digest*. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1930, p. 570.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 16

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

summer home built in 1916 at 5500 S. Tamiami Trail in Sarasota, Florida. This Otis and Clark Home was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.

On March 1, 1923, the Keith Family sold the home to typesetter Rolla W. McClure (b. September 15, 1888, White County, Illinois) and his wife, Katherine. According to the 1920 U.S. Census, the McClure family was living in the home as renters prior their purchase. Sometime between 1910 and 1920, the home was converted into a rooming house. Although the rooming house was operated by Bonnie James in 1920 with sixteen borders, Katherine McClure took over its operation by 1930, and rented it to six different households.¹⁷ By 1938, the home was sold again. Although it is unclear from property records how long their ownership lasted, Patrick Cosgrove and his wife became the fourth family to own the home.¹⁸ The house was reincarnated once again as The Prairie House Café, a restaurant operating in 1970. By 1971, the property's owners were in the Chancery Division of the Cook County Circuit Court. The property was sold to a trust at Exchange National Bank and then to Peter Fung et.al. on March 20, 1975. It remained in the Fung family until October 30, 2001, when purchased by its current owners, the Martorina Family.

THE ARCHITECTURAL FIRM OF COBB AND FROST

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century architects who trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have made a significant contribution to architecture and planning in the City of Chicago. Receiving training from America's first architecture program, partners Henry Ives Cobb, F.A.I.A., (1859-1931) and Charles Sumner Frost, F.A.I.A., (1856-1931) left Boston for Chicago to become reputable and highly successful architects in the Midwest by the late 1800s. As two of the few American architects who were trained in the early years of the profession, the architectural firm of Cobb & Frost quickly gained clients in the Chicago area. Henry Ives Cobb was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on August 19, 1859, and received his architectural education through coursework at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a degree from the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard University.¹⁹ Born in 1856, Frost was the son of a

¹⁷ 1920 and 1930 U. S. Census data.

¹⁸ Tract Book 502A, p. 219-220. Cook County Recorder of Deeds Office, Chicago, IL.

¹⁹ Withey, p. 128-129

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

mill owner and lumber merchant in Lewiston, Maine, and received a degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1876.²⁰ Both found initial employment in the Boston office of Peabody and Stearns.²¹ After winning an 1881 competition to design the Union Club house formerly located at the southwest corner of Delaware Street and Dearborn Street in Chicago, Cobb left Boston for Chicago. Charles Frost soon followed, and the two established their Chicago partnership in 1882. The firm quickly assumed and maintained a highly-regarded position in the architectural community, with high-profile commissions. Many of these commissions were large-scale residential designs, particularly for prominent Chicagoans. Arguably Cobb and Frost's crowning achievement is one of their earliest designs, the prominent and palatial Potter Palmer Residence (1882-85), a crenellated Norman-style castle formerly located at Lake Shore Drive between Banks and Schiller streets. Also notable is the landmark 1885-86 Ransom R. Cable House, located at 25 East Erie Street, noted as an imposing and picturesque Richardsonian Romanesque Style design. Many of Cobb & Frost's designs are strong and distinguished examples of historically derived architecture, particularly Romanesque. Attention to detail has also made Cobb & Frost designs of significantly higher caliber than others of their era. Besides the Palmer and Cable Residences, known residential designs in Chicago by Cobb and Frost and by Henry Ives Cobb alone including the following:

- Dr. E. M. Hale Residence, Chicago. Published in *Inland Architect and News Record*, vol. 14, pp. 98, Jan 1890;
- C. E. Judson Residence, Chicago;
- Benjamin Allen Residence, Chicago;
- H. L. Thayer Residence, 2953 Prairie Avenue (1886);
- Three houses for Marvin Hughitt, Prairie Avenue (1886);
- John Howland Townsend Residence, 915 North Dearborn Street, Romanesque Revival (1887);
- W. H. Bush Residence, State Street (1888);
- Six houses for A. G. Hale, Prairie Avenue (1888);
- Residence at 52 East Bellevue Place, Romanesque Revival Style (1889);

²⁰ Withey, p. 224.

²¹ Ransom R. Cable House. Preliminary Staff Summary of Information. Chicago: Commission on Chicago Landmarks, August 1989.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 18

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

- Residence at 58 East Bellevue Place (1889);
- Miner T. Ames House (Coleman-Ames House), 1811 South Prairie Avenue, Romanesque Revival Style building located in Prairie Avenue National Register Historic District (1886);
- Osborn R. Keith Residence, 1808 South Prairie Avenue, (1886, demolished 1968); and
- Dr. John A. McGill Residence, 4938 South Drexel Boulevard, an exceptional and massive Chateausque Style residence in Chicago's Kenwood neighborhood and a Chicago landmark (1891).²²

The list above indicates that Cobb and Frost designed several residences on Prairie Avenue aside from the Harriet Rees House. The Miner T. Ames House (now known as the Coleman-Ames House) located at 1811 South Prairie Avenue, is comparable to the Rees House. Constructed two years before the Rees House, the 1886 design by Cobb and Frost shares similar Romanesque Style elements, but contrasts greatly with the refined elegance expressed in the smooth-faced Rees House. Instead, the Ames House is weighty and massive, with squat columns and a rusticated dark brownstone exterior. Another known Cobb & Frost design was created across the street from the Ames House on Prairie Avenue, the Osborn R. Keith Residence, built for Edson Keith, Jr.'s uncle. Once located next to the world famous Glessner House, today, only the north wall of the Osborn Keith home remains.

Cobb and Frost dissolved their partnership in the late 1880s and both were successful in their new ventures. Charles Frost teamed up with architect Alfred Hoyt Granger to specialize in railroad station design. The LaSalle Street Station (1901-03) and the Chicago and North Western Terminal (1906-11) in Chicago, both now demolished, were their projects, as were the Union Stations in Omaha, Nebraska, and St. Paul, Minnesota.²³

Working independently in Chicago until his move to Washington, D.C in 1898 and then New York in 1902, Henry Ives Cobb executed a number of important buildings that demonstrated his proficiency in different stylistic idioms. The range includes:

²² Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals. Database on-line.

²³ *Ransom R. Cable House*, p. 7.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

- Eighteen English Gothic Revival style buildings at the University of Chicago and quadrangles that are contributing structures in the Hyde Park-Kenwood National Register Historic District (1891-1900);
- Chicago Athletic Club, 12 S. Michigan, designed in the Venetian Gothic style and located in the Historic Michigan Boulevard Chicago Landmark District (1893);
- Several buildings at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, including the Fisheries Building, based on eighth-century Romanesque architecture, and an accurate rendition of Northern Indian architecture for the India Pavilion;
- Chicago Varnish Company Building, 33 W. Kinzie St., designed in the Dutch Renaissance Revival style and a designated Chicago landmark (1895);
- the Richardsonian Romanesque-Style Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St., located in the Washington Square Chicago Landmark and National Register District (1888-92); and
- the former Chicago Historical Society (1892-96; 632 N. Dearborn St.), Richardsonian Romanesque in style, a designated Chicago landmark and National Register designated.²⁴

The prominence of Cobb's clients and his prestigious commissions are evidence of his architectural success. Cobb was an architect who, without being completely literal, convincingly adapted European styles to the American urban environment. Daniel Bluestone in his 1991 book, *Constructing Chicago*, described Cobb as "experienced at linking cultural concerns and architectural forms."²⁵

In his day Henry Ives Cobb was considered one of the best and most distinguished architects in Chicago. The famed architecture critic of the 1890s, Montgomery Schuyler, discusses Cobb's work in an issue of *Architectural Record* along with two exceptional Chicago firms: Adler & Sullivan, and D.H. Burnham & Co. This grouping is its own measure of the high esteem in which Cobb was held during his career:

[T]he architect has reached a personal expression within the limits of an historical style, and has given evidence of an artistic individuality in addition to the abundant

²⁴ *McGill House, Landmark Designation Report*. Chicago: Commission on Chicago Landmarks, February 2006, p. 7

²⁵ Bluestone, Daniel. *Constructing Chicago*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 20

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

testimony given in his work to a remarkable technical equipment and a really astonishing versatility and facility.²⁶

Although remarkably successful and critically acclaimed, Cobb's practice rapidly declined by the end of the nineteenth-century. The financial panic of 1893 and the ensuing depression curtailed new construction, affecting Cobb and other architects. As architectural fashion shifted, Cobb's historicist architecture fell out of favor. Historians later viewed the works of his contemporaries, Louis Sullivan (of Adler & Sullivan) and John Root (Daniel Burnham's partner), as the prelude to Modernism.²⁷

THE ARCHITECTURAL STYLING OF THE REES HOUSE

Recently, Chicagoan Julius Lewis, a scholar on the work of Cobb & Frost, noted that Henry Ives Cobb's best work was executed in Chicago and in the Romanesque Revival idiom first made famous by H. H. Richardson.²⁸

The Harriet Rees House is an exceptional and now rare example of the Romanesque Revival style remaining on Chicago's Near South Side. The Romanesque Revival Style is a picturesque style found in American buildings constructed from 1840 to 1900. Buildings in the Romanesque Revival style are always masonry, monochromatic, and usually with some rough-faced stonework. Wide, round arches of the kind found in Roman or European Romanesque architecture are an important identifying feature, and they often rest on squat columns. There is frequently decorative floral detail in the stonework and sometimes on column capitals. Windows are typically single-paned sash, usually deeply recessed into the exterior wall and are often grouped with three or more windows. Dormers are also common and are frequently parapeted and gabled wall dormers. In the late nineteenth-century the style was popularized by Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886) and is frequently called Richardsonian Romanesque. Many of his peers, particularly in Boston, were influenced by Richardson, including Henry Ives Cobb and Charles Sumner Frost, both whom began their careers in

²⁶ Schuyler, Montgomery. A Critique of the Works of Adler & Sullivan. D. H. Burnham & Co., Henry Ives Cobb. *Architectural Record* (Great American Architects Series), no. 2, February 1896, p. 73-110.

²⁷ McGill House, p. 9.

²⁸ Yoe, Mary Ruth. Cobb's Other Buildings. *University of Chicago Magazine*. June 1999.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

that city. The first of Richardson's buildings in this style was the influential design for the 1880 rectory for Trinity Church in Boston. From there, H. H. Richardson's Romanesque Style made a significant impact on architecture in Chicago and throughout the nation. From roughly 1885 to 1900, in Chicago alone, hundreds of public and private buildings were built in this style. Only three Chicago structures were actually designed by Richardson: the Marshall Field Wholesale Store (1885-87, demolished), the Franklin MacVeagh House (1885-86, demolished), and the John J. Glessner House (1886-87), a Chicago Landmark and a National Historic Landmark. Their greatly contrasting scales and uses in turn gave local architects highly visible models.

In Chicago, the examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque Style include dozens of public building types, such as schools, cultural institutions and monuments, as well as religious buildings. Among the best known are: the Auditorium Building (1886-90); the former Chicago Historical Society Building (1890-95); and the Armour Institute Main Building (1891-93), all Chicago Landmarks; and the base of the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Lincoln Park (1886-91). The style was considered very expensive for late nineteenth-century houses and not for the masses. It was a style more popular for large public buildings. However, a number of architect-designed residences in the Romanesque Style were constructed for Chicago's elite in the 1880s and 1890s, with examples remaining in the city's most exclusive neighborhoods of the era.

The Rees House falls under the "townhouse" sub-type of the style, categorized by Virginia and Lee McAlester in their definitive book, *A Field Guide to American Houses*.²⁹ Residential buildings of this sub-type are either detached or attached urban houses, typically with front-gabled or mansard roofs. According to the McAlesters, the attached variety is less common in the United States. Yet in Chicago, the Romanesque Style is surprisingly common for townhouses.

Comparable designs to the Rees House are found in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey, the city's inventory of architecturally significant resources. Only three architecturally significant Romanesque Revival-style townhouses are found in the Near South Side community area where the Rees House is located, while twenty-seven more buildings are found in the nearby Oakland and Armour Square community areas. Noted

²⁹ McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991, p. 301-307.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8

Page 22

**Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL**

homes in the style and subtype are typically two to three stories in height, with rusticated facades and massive stone arch openings. Many are graced with foliated stone panels or columns topped with foliated capitals.

The Rees House is remarkable in its restrained elegance. Cobb and Frost masterfully chose to use smooth, ashlar limestone instead of rusticated stone for the principal façade. This smooth limestone serves as a refined backdrop for the high relief Romanesque Style elements that ornament the facade. The subtle curve of the two-story bay dominates the front, and its foliated frieze and copper roof with delicate foliated trim appear more prominent. The decisive round-arched entry echoes the colonnade of windows at the third floor, with the whisper of a round-arched window in the gable peak.

The colonnade, a signature element of the Richardsonian Romanesque Style, establishes a strong horizontality in counterpoint to the otherwise steep verticality of the building imposed by a narrow, twenty-four foot lot. The deep recesses of the arch tops contrast with the ornate capitals of the squat columns. Above the colonnade, the steeply pitched gable rises above the slate roof behind it. The angles of the gable are visually dominant, with the flattened foliated panel in the gable peak and the decorative gable ends providing a rich texture.

In the interior, although constrained in plan by the narrow site, unique architectural detailing and a rich use of materials make each room exceptional. The interplay of the geometric circle motif with the sinuous foliated motifs offers both naturalistic as well as simply aesthetic detail. The use of different woods with a variety of colors and grains, as well as the employ of many ceramic tile patterns in the fireplaces, some with figurative designs, show this home to have been executed by skilled designers who were able to create a cohesive expression through the use of repeating decorative motifs.

Cobb and Frost were challenged to create a residential design for a demanding client on a prestigious street, but within the constraints of a very narrow lot. With Romanesque as the style of choice, the architects immediately created a tension between expressing majesty on such a limited site. Although relatively slender by physical standards, the Rees House is monumental in its expressive power.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 23

Name of property
City, County, IL

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 24

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City, County, IL

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 25

Name of property
City, County, IL

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 26

**Name of Property
City, County, IL**

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property Index Number: 17-22-320-010-0000

Legal description:

SOUTH TWENTY-FOUR AND EIGHT TENTHS FEET OF LOT THREE IN BLOCK 25 IN GURLEY'S SUBDIVISION OF BLOCKS 24 TO 28 INCLUSIVE IN ASSESSOR'S DIVISION OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL ONE QUARTER OF SECTION TWENTY TWO, TOWNSHIP THIRTY NINE NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the building, the coach house, and the property known commonly as 2110 South Prairie Avenue, Chicago, IL.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 27

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

PHOTOGRAPH LIST

Photos by: Victoria Granacki, December 2006

- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse01.tif – Front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse02.tif - Front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse03.tif – Detail, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse04.tif - Detail, third floor colonnade, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse05.tif - Bay window, front (east) façade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse06.tif – Detail, bay window ornament, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse07.tif - Detail, front gable, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse08.tif - Ornamental detailing, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse09.tif - Colonnade detail, front (east) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse10.tif - South side façade, looking northeast
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse11.tif - Rear (west) facade
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse12.tif - North side façade, looking southeast
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse13.tif - Coach house from alley, looking northeast
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse14.tif - Coach house from rear yard, looking west
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse15.tif - Front entry door and vestibule
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse16.tif - Foyer and vestibule (looking northeast)
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse17.tif – Foyer and stair hall
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse18.tif - Main staircase
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse19.tif - Staircase detail
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse20.tif - Staircase detail
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse21.tif – Front parlor and fireplace, first floor, looking southeast
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse22.tif - Front parlor and bay window, first floor, looking east
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse23.tif - Detail, front parlor fireplace
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse24.tif - Front parlor pocket doors, looking west into second parlor, first floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse25.tif - Second parlor, first floor, looking southwest
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse26.tif - Second parlor fireplace
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse27.tif - Drawing room and stair hall, first floor, looking east
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse28.tif – Typical door and trim, first floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse29.tif – Servants stair and elevator, first floo

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 28

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse30.tif – Drawing room, looking into west into dining room, first floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse31.tif – Dining room, first floor, looking east into servant's stair
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse32.tif – Dining room, first floor, looking southwest
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse33.tif – Detail, dining room fireplace and built-ins
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse34.tif – Second floor hallway, looking east
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse35.tif – Bedroom #1, second floor, looking southeast
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse36.tif – Detail, built-in shutters, Bedroom #1, second floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse37.tif – South wall and fireplace, bedroom #1, second floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse38.tif – Bedroom #2, looking southwest, second floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse39.tif – Staircase, second floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse40.tif – Second floor stair hall, looking west
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse41.tif – Detail, elevator and crank
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse42.tif – North wall and fireplace, Bedroom #3
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse43.tif – Staircase landing and skylight, third floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse44.tif – Detail, skylight
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse45.tif – Third floor hallway, looking east
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse46.tif – Window detail, bedroom #4 (front), third floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse47.tif – South wall and fireplace, bedroom #4, third floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse48.tif – Bedroom #5 and fireplace, third floor, looking southwest
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse49.tif – Servants' Hall, third floor rear, looking northwest
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse50.tif – Typical door and transom, third floor
- IL_CookCounty_ReesHouse51.tif – Attic, showing roof structure

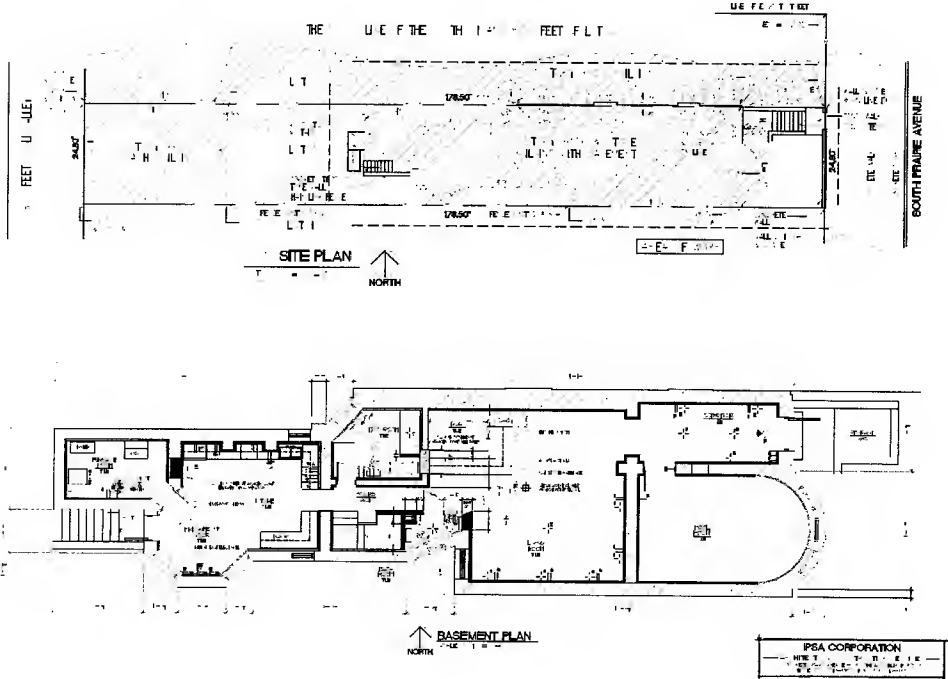
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 29

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

SITE AND FLOOR PLANS



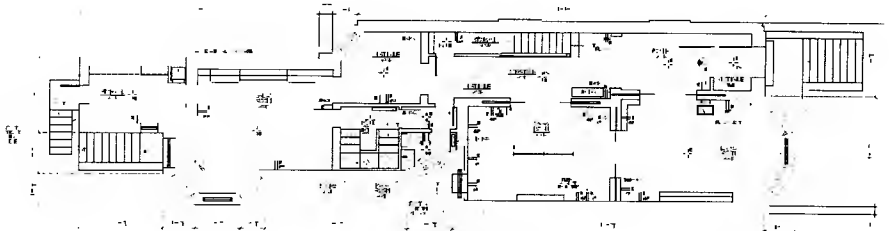
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

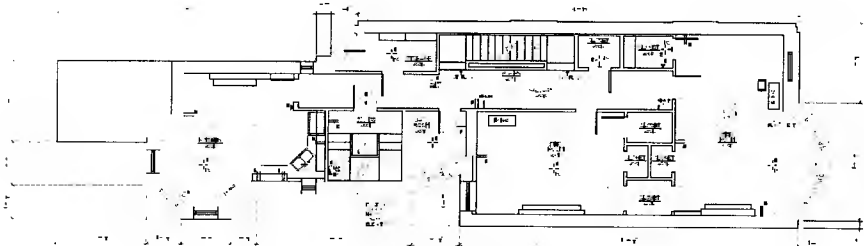
Section number 11 Page 30

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

SITE AND FLOOR PLANS



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NORTH



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NORTH

PSA CORPORATION
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017
ARCHITECTS

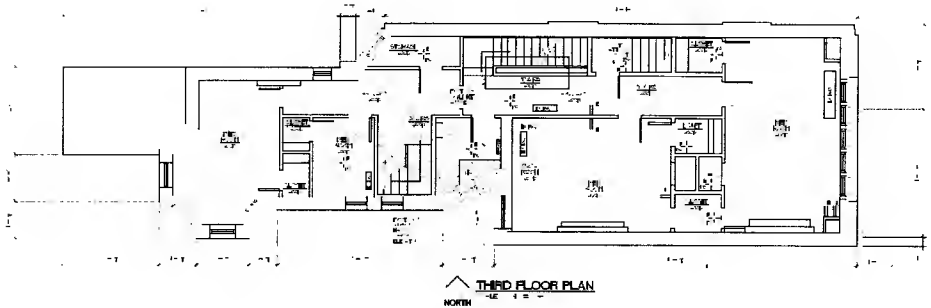
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 11 Page 31

Harriet F. Rees House
Chicago, Cook County, IL

SITE AND FLOOR PLANS





Address 2110 S Prairie Ave
Chicago, IL 60616



ARKANSAS, POPE COUNTY,
Archeological Site 3PP614,
Address Restricted,
Sand Gap vicinity, 07000203,
LISTED, 5/23/07
(Rock Art Sites in Arkansas TR)

ARKANSAS, SEBASTIAN COUNTY,
Arkansas 22, Old, Barling Segment,
Mayo Rd,
Barling, 07000439,
LISTED, 5/22/07
(Arkansas Highway History and Architecture MPS)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE EQUIVALENT, Grant, Ulysses S.,
School, 2130 G St. NW, Washington, 07000447, LISTED, 5/22/07 (Public School Buildings
of Washington, DC MPS)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA STATE EQUIVALENT, Uline Ice Company
Plant and Arena Complex, 1132, 1140, and 1146 3rd St. NE, Washington, 07000448,
LISTED, 5/17/07

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Building at 399 West Fullerton Parkway,
399 W. Fullerton Ave.,
Chicago, 07000456,
LISTED, 5/22/07

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Rees, Harriet F., House,
2110 S. Prairie Ave.,
Chicago, 07000458,
LISTED, 5/22/07

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,
Steuben Club, The,
188 W. Randolph St.,
Chicago, 07000457,
LISTED, 5/22/07

ILLINOIS, FORD COUNTY,
Dunn--Hampton House,
511 W. Pells St.,
Paxton, 07000455,
LISTED, 5/22/07

ILLINOIS, LOGAN COUNTY,
Hoblit House,